

2011- Caucus Sessions

Kansas Disability Caucus

The Regional Caucus Sessions are designed to provide you the opportunity to formulate an advocacy agenda for the State of Kansas. On Wednesday, participants will meet by legislative districts to formulate statements of concern and actions regarding the current status of disability rights within the areas of housing, independent living, legislative issues, transportation, employment, ADA and other issues concerning people with disabilities. On Thursday, Caucus participants will map a plan of action for advocacy efforts around the state. The reporting out session on Friday gives everyone an opportunity to share their great ideas with the whole group.

Information gathered during the Regional Caucus Sessions will assist the SILCK in developing the State Plan for Independent Living. This plan will unite Kansans to carry out grass roots advocacy efforts and develop solutions for now and beyond on a local, statewide and national level.

We are using three Regions as depicted below. You can locate your Regional Caucus Session by the counties below.

We are using three legislative districts divided as follows:

Region 1

includes these counties:

Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton, Phillips, Smith, Jewell, Republic, Washington, Marshall, Nemaha, Brown, Doniphan, Sherman, Thomas, Sheridan, Graham, Rooks, Osborne, Mitchell, Cloud, Clay, Riley, Pottawatomie, Jackson, Atchison, Jefferson, Leavenworth, Wyandotte.

Region 2

includes these counties:

Wallace, Logan, Gove Trego, Ellis, Russell, Lincoln, Ottawa, Dickinson, Geary, Wabaunsee, Shawnee, Douglas, Johnson, Greeley, Wichita, Scott, Lane, Ness, Rush, Barton, Ellsworth, Rice, Saline, McPherson, Marion, Chase, Osage, Franklin, Miami.

Region 3

includes these counties:

Hamilton, Kearney, Finney, Hodgeman, Pawnee, Stafford, Reno, Harvey, Butler, Greenwood, Coffey, Anderson, Linn, Woodson, Allen, Bourbon, Stanton, Grant, Haskell, Gray, Ford, Edwards, Kiowa, Pratt, Kingman, Sedgwick, Butler, Elk, Wilson, Neosho, Crawford, Morton, Stevens, Seward, Meade, Clark, Comanche, Barber, Harper, Sumner, Cowley, Chautauqua, Montgomery, Labette, Cherokee.

Region 1- Report

1. **Barrier:** Centers for Independent Living

Lack of a clear definition of what a CIL is. It seems that the general public doesn't have an understanding of CIL services.

Solutions:

CILs need to examine themselves as a whole and create a consistent "brand" that accurately describes CIL services including consumer success stories that demonstrate the power of CIL program. Develop a community education program that "markets" the message state-wide. Media blitz including the local public access cable channels, radio and newspaper.

CILs use the 704 definition of disability consistently to offer CIL services to increase community awareness of CIL services.

Increase partnerships with other non-profit agencies, youth groups and community groups.

CILs should be a more active partner in support of the mission of other agencies. "Strength in numbers."

2. **Barrier:** The "cap in hand" image of people with disabilities that creates fear, projects "neediness", and prevents full consideration and therefore full-inclusion.

Solutions: Change the style and focus of advocacy efforts by presenting solutions over complaints with a positive "I can live independently, go to school, get a job,.. if I have..." instead of "I need... more money, more services,..." message and telling the IL story through consumer successes.

Establish a faster method of addressing advocacy issues through the development of a web-based forum (think Facebook) for a monthly Q&A call-in meetings and support.

3. **Barrier:** HCBS should not be a "one size fits all" program. There are not guidelines/policies in place that allows individualized supports to be used if needed. HCBS is good but now but now it's time to take it to the next level.

Solutions: Develop a "pre-support" system to that can be implemented before exact needs are determined through a finalized Plan of Care.

Improve quality of PA services through better compensation and training.

4. Barrier: Lack of accessible, affordable transportation.

Solutions: Consumer representation on transportation advisory boards.
Educate transportation providers on ADA and disability rights and etiquette.
Peer share successful transportation solutions.

5. Barrier: Lack of employment opportunities.

Solutions: More education to employers on the IL philosophy to look beyond the obvious and see the value of the individual.
Develop a stronger relationship between CILs and VR, Department of Labor and other agencies, events, DMD.
Increase consumer utilization of the benefits specialists, WORK, Working Healthy and other programs.
Ensure enforcement of Affirmative Action.
Utilize social media to promote companies that have made hiring people with disabilities a priority.

All barriers and solutions are unique but they all come together with collaboration, peer support, web forums, monthly call-in, education and community integration.

Region 2- Report

EQUALITY- NO EXCLUSION IN ACTIVITIES UNITY IN IL MOVEMENT POWER & PASSION

ISSUES THAT WERE NOTED BUT DUE TO TIME NO SOLUTIONS WERE CREATED:

WEIGHT

Increase awareness of weight issues
Increase bariatric resources
Eliminate Medicaid/Medicare restrictions

HOUSING

Housing options for accessible housing
Reasonable priced shelter options that are accessible

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation
Transportation in rural areas impedes employment

DME REFORM

No bidding

TRAINING ISSUES

Increase training and services for people who are blind or visually impaired
Increase staff training
Knowledge on ADHD and success with employment
Quality assurance & Training for PCA's

ISSUES REGION 2 WAS ABLE TO CREATE SOLUTIONS ON:

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Reinstate tax incentive
Enhance Work vs fear of loss of service like waiver
Educate employers hiring PWD do not increase workman comp claims
Risk/fear of increase work lost HCBS
VR Help all transition to 65

SOLUTIONS

Contact Chamber of Commerce and local business to partner in the reinstatement of tax incentives

WORK PROGRAM

More fiscal management provides
Increase qualifying maximum income levels and premiums at same time

ADVOCACY ISSUES

Increase our voices!!!!

More advocacy- more people-all people

More involvement in the political parties (est. minority group)

Increase involvement in legislative process

PWD run for office in city, county, state,

Tell our stories to legislators

Congress- other ways to cut spending

Cease Cuts

HCBS

Eliminate waiting lists

Community Choice Act

1915 I Waiver

SOLUTIONS

File Olmstead complaints statewide each person will try to get 10 by September 1, 2011 for individuals who qualify and choose

All members will complete advocacy efforts with friends, family and community members

Self advocacy trainings taught by all providers...

How to contact legislator

What the issues are

How to advocate

VOTE

Increase Register voters

Congressional districts- change will not be good for our group

Reverse voter registration legislation

SOLUTION:

Organize a voter registration drive

CILS ISSUES

Unity in IL Movement

Increase IL visibility

Articulate what we want

Increase awareness about what CILS do

Increase Leadership in Kansas & IL Movement

Mentors in IL Movement for all ages

Mentors/Role Models

Reauthorize the Rehab Act to protect in increase CIL funding

Increase state CIL Funding

Anti violence

Educate and enforce the ADA

SOLUTIONS:

Promote leaders from KYEA

Contact legislators regarding Rehab Act: each person will call, email, attend Town Hall meetings in groups
State CIL money contact legislators to educate on how important CILS are
Connect advocates together

AWARENESS & SENSITIVITY TRAINING ISSUES

Health Care Providers
Transportation
Agencies working with PWD
Educate all college professors by disability services
All levels of government
Be visible in community to increase awareness
Legislators/policy makers

SOLUTIONS

Educate all on HCBS waiting lists
CEU Credits: Support Health Care Access for PWD Ks.train.org
Each person in group will ask 5 people to increase awareness on issues
Make yourself seen
Talk to neighbors
Join groups

YOUTH ISSUES

Disability History and Awareness in all schools
Awareness of Rehab Services at high school level not when leaving
Anti Bullying/violence
Empowerment services for youth
Increase self empowerment and advocacy
Mentors/Role Models
Reach out to agencies who work with youth make it a community effort

SOLUTIONS

Promote the KCDC Website
Visit schools, partner with KYEA.. each person committed to contacting one school in their community

Contact could be school board but must get to the teacher level to be successful
Youth want activities in their own communities: idea grew to youth with and without disabilities partnering together in activities

Educate and mentor youth to run and hold local, state, federal office
Steps to Respect Curriculum
Zero Tolerance
Anti Bullying campaigns by student with athletics
Develop a color or symbol to identify disability awareness week to be worn by community members all over Kansas

Region 3- Report

Upcoming Medicaid Reform

Concern about secrecy and lack of information regarding Medicaid Reform, cutting \$200-400 million, ushering in managed care which means less choice

SILCK has created talking points to share on the Medicaid Reform Website

Contact Lt. Gov. Colyer with same talking points, personal stories

Share personal stories in Letters to the Editor

Additional points to focus on include emphasizing wellness and preventative care, creating a bridge to employment within services for those who are SSI recipients only, need for fair PCA wages

Stay networked with the Disability Community perhaps through a large email network to stay up to date on changes and proposals as it happens

On the Federal level, call and contact every member of the "Super" committee as well as your elected Congress people.

Transportation

Concerns are lack of transportation and lack of accountability and quality assurance for MTM

Work with different community groups that face the same transportation difficulties such as Aging, college students, low income workers needing public transit, and environmental groups.

Be vocal with local and state officials about the ongoing transportation need.

Be willing to negotiate with providers. For example: Perhaps they can expand evening service and shorten odd day hours.

Contact transportation providers to find out what their barriers are to providing needed services, partner with them.

Join local transportation boards and attend District Advisory Board meetings

Reach out to non-traditional providers as partners for example, Nursing Facilities with buses

Speak with Medicaid liaison for specific complaints/issues with MTM

Contact State Transportation Dept with complaints about MTM as a provider

Speak with friends/community members to have them become a driver with MTM

Encourage transportation providers to communicate services to CILs and other agencies such as accommodations available, days and times of service.

Housing

Concern is the lack of affordable, accessible and integrated housing. There is a lack of accountability within HUD to maintain safe and adequately maintained housing.

Maintain open communication with your local housing office.

Present to City/County Councils regarding the needs for housing, the condition of housing, remain vocal!

Attend Chamber meetings, many real estate developers attend and may be interested

Contact/Lobby HUD to change restrictions

Be good tenants to encourage landlords to want to rent to individuals with disabilities in the future

Advocate more assertively for HUD to allow more flexibility for local offices to offer choice to individuals, for example, 2 bedrooms vs. 1 bedroom for a single person.
Vocally discourage funding for 811 projects/segregated housing

Disability Community

Concerns are the lack of general community involvement by the disability community, low or no expectations for ourselves, low employment rates, lack of high youth expectations, low voter turnout.

Take personal responsibility to learn communication skills

Put community boards, commissions, agencies on your email list and send them advocacy alerts (with the option to opt out of future emails.)

Join community boards be active in areas that are not just disability specific

CILs should hold leadership trainings ACTA in Wichita does this

Stay in contact with the media Make commitment and follow through on it

Join or create coalitions

Maintain open communication with everyone

Employment

Concern is the fear of losing benefits when becoming employed.

Contact Workforce Center

Speak with Benefits Specialist

Contact CILS- they offer Peer Support and WORK program info

We must have expectation that we will/can/should work

Set personal goals, Do a time study for PCA needs determination

Advocate for systems change to support employment

Increase informal supports to transition

Self Determination and maintain positive thoughts

Supports

Concern is lack of support groups/informal supports especially in rural areas

"House, pickup, doing it on my own!"

CILS/agencies can be contacted to start support groups

Contribute to neighbors/communities

Churches

CIL Peer groups

Post in community locations for support

Use technology/ Skype

Youth

Concern is a lack of youth empowerment and there are low expectations.

Contact school systems, network and volunteer to be involved with YWD as a positive mentor

Encourage school boards to implement the curriculum for disability awareness

Provide parent education to encourage higher expectations

Programs exist such as Youth Friends and Big Brothers Big Sisters

Start or participate in DMD

High schools should have transition counselors to work with

Schools have community based programs you can volunteer for.

Law Enforcement

Concern is the lack of knowledge of disability within law enforcement.

We need to provide education to law enforcement in Wichita contact Brian Kuhns

Nursing Facility

Concern is losing housing/belongings to NF Placement that the State then pays to replace with MFTP

File Olmstead complaints to keep people from NF

Will NF store belongings?

Find funding with churches, family, community for storage units.

Advocate for systems change to have a time period in which a person doesn't lose everything